Water cess on sea water

*50. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:†
SHRI ABANI ROY:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that sea water is available in the country in abundance;

(b) whether Government have issued notification for collection of cess on use of sea water by State Pollution Authorities;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for collecting cess on sea water and how much revenue is likely to be collected by Government;

(d) whether imposing of cess on sea water will harnper the industrial growth in the country especially in and around coastal areas; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken to withdraw cess on sea water?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977 provides for the levy of a cess on industries and local bodies using water. There is no separate notification regarding levy of cess on use of sea water. The cess is intended to minimize consumption and pollution of water by the industries and local authorities. The cess amount is utilized for augmenting the resources of the Central and State Pollution Control Boards. Every person carrying on any industry and every local authority using water, irrespective of the source from where water is drawn, is liable to pay cess based on the quantity of water consumed by them. The water cess is collected by the Governments of States and Union Territories from all the industries, except Hydel Power Units, and is remitted to the Consolidated Fund of India every month in lump sum. No separate account is maintained about the cess collected from the industries using sea water.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Prof. Alka Balram Kshatriya.

The collection of water cess, from industries and local authorities, during the financial year 2003-04 was Rs.88.50 crores.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. The water cess is a small charge that the industries using water including sea water have to bear for the protection of the environment and conservation of natural resources.

प्रो॰ अलका क्षत्रिय: सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से कहना चाहती हूं कि समुद्र तट की जमीन पर जब प्रोन कल्चर और फिश कल्चर के लिए जो सी वॉटर यूज़ होता है, उससे पर्यावरण को बहुत बड़ा खतरा होता है। क्या मंत्री जी यह बात जानते हैं? जो सी वॉटर प्रोन कल्चर और फिश कल्चर के लिए यूज़ होता है, उसके ऊपर कोई कर लिया जाता है या नहीं? इसके बारे में मंत्री जी के क्या विचार हैं?

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, there is no survey exclusively for sea water. But, there is the Water Cess Act, which is a Central Act, in which, notwithstanding sea water, whatever be the source of water used by industry and other local authorities, Cess is levied by the State Government concerned. Out of the cess so collected, 80 per cent will be given to the State Government and the remaining 20 per cent goes to the Central Government. And, as such, there is no demarcation between sea water and other water.

प्रो॰ अलका क्षत्रिय: सर, गुजरात में बड़ा समुद्र तट है और समुद्र तट की जमीन में salinity बढ़ती है जिससे जमीन की फर्टेलिटी खत्म हो जाती है। इसके बारे में सरकार ने क्या कदम उठाए हैं और वित्तीय वर्ष 2003-2004 के दौरान उद्योग एवं स्थानीय इकाई से जो कर इकट्ठा किया गया, उसमें से गुजरात का हिस्सा कितना है और गुजरात के ऊपर इसमें से कितना खर्च किया जा रहा है?

SHRI A. RAJA: The State Government, local bodies and private industries are free to use sea water or any other water. The cess would be levied as per the rules.

*51. [*The questioners* (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI AND DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) *were absent. For answer vide page* 34].

Stampede at New Delhi Railway Station

*52. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prime cause of stampede and resultant deaths at